

Attachment E

Mentally Ill Offender Defined for the Purpose of the Grant

It is important to determine the target population of “mentally ill offender.” Senate Bill 1485 relies on Section 5600.3 of the Welfare and Institutions Code for its definition of mental illness. According to this section, the mentally ill offender targeted by the MIOCR Grant must have:

1. a mental disorder as identified in the most recent addition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association (other than a substance use disorder, developmental disorder, or acquired traumatic brain disorder, unless the person also has some other serious mental disorder) as determined by a licensed mental health professional; and
2. serious functional impairments, symptoms or psychiatric history such that, without treatment, there is imminent risk of further decompensation (especially in terms of the ability to engage in independent living, positive social relationships, and vocational opportunities).

There are hundreds of mental disorders identified in the most recent version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV). It is impossible for the BOC to determine on its own the myriad of diagnostic categories that are prevalent and problematic in the many different localities in California. The BOC also has no preconceived ideas regarding which diagnostic categories present the most problems for the criminal justice system, or the best opportunities for successful and cost-effective interventions. Therefore, for the purposes of the MIOCRG RFP, the ESC recommends that:

1. Interested agencies, pay close attention to the language in Senate Bill 1485 (Attachment B) and the Welfare and Institutions Code in developing their definitions of the mentally ill offender target group; and
2. Interested agencies develop a locally defined target group that is:
 - sufficiently large so that a successful program can have a meaningful and positive effect on the criminal justice system, and so that reliable and measurable conclusions can be drawn from the demonstration project (i.e., in terms of a reduction in crime committed by mentally ill offenders, criminal justice costs, and jail crowding);
 - defined in terms of the diagnostic categories that will best address the needs of the local mentally ill offender population; and
 - consistent with the needs and resources of the local jurisdiction.

Preference will not be given to proposals that involve a specific target population determined by the BOC. Rather, proposals will be evaluated in terms of the case made by the local jurisdiction for working with a specific, locally-determined target group. Despite which categories might constitute a jurisdiction's target group, the BOC requires that grant participants submit, as part of their reporting requirements, the DSM-IV diagnoses for all members of the demonstration grant research sample.